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Industrial relations J. A. Banks reviews five new books on shop stewards, worker directors, class conflict and industrial relations. 14

More work, less pay In "Briefing" Judith Judd looks at the background to the current dispute over university teachers' pay. 9

St Andrews The Oxbridge of the North? David Walker visits St. Andrews, Scotland's oldest university and its most English. 8

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History books Rhodesia, Sir Samuel Hoare, Parnell, and France under the Bourbons are among the subjects covered in eight pages of reviews of new history books. I-VIII

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UGC reassured over new spending limits

By Judith Judd. The University Grants Committee is in no doubt that the Government will stand by its assurance to revise limits on university spending to cope with increases in pay and prices. Lord Boyle, vice-chancellor of Leeds University... The long-term effects on universities of the lecturers' pay anomaly would be very serious.

Liverpool Council warned over pay-docking threat

Solicitors acting for the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education have sent a stern letter of warning to Liverpool City Council over the authority's threat to dock the pay of lecturers taking part in a work-to-rule. Last week the city council agreed to adopt a recommendation from its education committee to deduct money from the salaries of more than 1,000 lecturers from eight further education colleges...

Over half lecturers had no degree

More than 60 per cent of teachers in Britain's institutions of higher and further education, excluding universities, did not possess degrees in 1975, according to Government figures published this week. Of 63,194 lecturers in polytechnics and other major establishments only 23,497 were graduates. In colleges of education nearly half the staff were without degrees. More than 4,600 of a total of 10,810 were non-graduates, as were 2,193 of the 13,000 lecturers and professors in polytechnics.

NEXT WEEK

Briefing on the AUT pay claim. Ancient Scottish universities: St Andrews. G. G. Ionescu on Eurocommunism. Nicholas Garnham on media studies.

High Court asked for second ruling in Vyas case

By Peter David. The messy dispute over the admission this term of Mr Suresh Vyas to a social work course at North East London Polytechnic has now been taken to the High Court. The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work this week asked the High Court to make a ruling in the case of the polytechnic's admission of Mr Vyas, who is alleged to have failed the normal selection procedures. The council's statement coincided with a student walk-out on Tuesday when Mr Vyas attended a lecture at the polytechnic for the first time. A spokesman for the students' union said afterwards: "The students on the first-year CQSW course will boycott all lectures, seminars and tutorials that Mr Vyas attends. This is the result of Mr Vyas attempting to attend a first-year lecture after receiving a letter from the director instructing him to attend."



Mr Raymond Rickett, director of Middlesex Polytechnic, sits on a dumper truck in a warehouse bay at Bounds Green, north London, which is being converted into a major site for the polytechnic. Several bays have already been converted, and engineering and design students started work there this term.

Poly heads hold private forum

Polytechnic governors and directors are meeting in private today to discuss "issues of mutual concern". This informal forum, instigated by the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics, comes in the wake of growing criticism of the committee's effectiveness as a national mouthpiece. The meeting at the Piccadilly Hotel in London is seen as an attempt to increase mutual understanding between the committee and polytechnic governors. Last month a move to strengthen the collective voice of polytechnics by setting up a national association of governors failed after representatives of only 13 of the 30 polytechnics attended a seminar to discuss a draft constitution. Many governing bodies are concerned that increasing intervention by local authorities in polytechnic affairs will weaken auton-

Cambridge staff 'underpaid'

University lecturers in Cambridge are investigating whether academics there have been paid over a period of five years. The Association of University Teachers has told the University Grants Committee that it believes some staff have been underpaid by one or two thousand pounds on the agreed scale. The problem originated when national agreed scales were introduced, which already had a similar problem in the case of academics' salaries up to a level. Mr R. E. Meehan, president of the lecturers' union, said the university had not retained the arrangements some staff received two increments in succession. The difference between schemes is that in Cambridge a senior lecturer's salary is paid either on the basis of appointment or on a scale according to college. In the latter scheme it is paid on the latter basis. If the university had also system to allow increments to be paid on the national scale which would be payable on 29 September 20 would be a one increment on the scale and then another on October 20. Mr Macpherson agreed the anomalies had occurred as a result of the university's policy. He said, could have been behind for as much as £2,000 for each year. The university had to pay back money it could amount to thousands of pounds.

TUC hopes for major role in running Fircroft College

A new constitution for Fircroft College at Birmingham, closed two years ago after student unrest, has been approved by the TUC General Council. It will now be up to the Fircroft education officials that the college will not be dominated by trades union interests. The college, which was a one-year residential course in liberal studies for mature students, was closed after students banned the principal and began organizing their own education programme. A DES inquiry report later recommended the principal and four tutors should be sacked and the college reopened. The trustees dismissed the tutors, but retained the principal, Mr Tony Cortfield, as a warning. The new constitution, if accepted by the trustees and the DES, would give trade unions a simple majority on the governing body. While some of the trustees have been unhappy about this, the DES view has been that it would be unusual but not an insuperable barrier. But at a conference last month of all interested parties, the DES insisted that the liberal studies course be fundamental to Fircroft. The TUC proposal is for a one-year residential course based on the previous liberal studies course, a day release course to spread over three years. At the conference the DES emphasized that the liberal studies course could not be merely a face-saving addition to trades union

'National grants committee' agreed by Oakes

by Peter David. Far-reaching changes in the management and finance of polytechnics and colleges have at last been agreed in principle by the Oakes committee, which has been reviewing the control of higher education in the public sector. An outline final report giving a new system of combined national and local finance was discussed last week. It recommends setting up a national council to distribute more than 85 per cent of the costs of polytechnics and colleges, the remainder being paid directly by the maintaining local authorities. When established, the national council will become one of the most powerful bodies in higher education. Its main job will be to negotiate annually with central and local government the total amount of money currently £1,000m a year—to be spent on public sector higher education. It will be responsible for dividing it up between individual institutions and courses, analysing supply and demand and liaising with the University Grants Committee. The council is expected to have 24 members. Despite requests for a majority, local government will have only seven but they will be given a form of veto to avoid being out-voted on major issues affecting local government duties and prerogatives. The detailed working of this veto is to be the subject of a Department of Education and Science paper at the next meeting of the committee. One feature is likely to be that if seven will have to be unanimous when exercising it. Polytechnics and colleges themselves will account for another seven members. The Committee of Directors of Polytechnics and the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education will nominate two each, the remainder being appointed by the Secretary of State. This group is expected to include at least one principal of a non-polytechnic institution and a member of the National Union of Students. A final seven members also nominated by the Secretary of State, to represent "other interests" such as the universities, the schools and members of the regional bodies. There would also be two representatives of industry and an independent chairman. Although the national body is to

distribute 85 per cent of the costs, the 15 per cent that will be paid directly to institutions by their maintaining local authorities represents a much larger local stake than exists under the present pooling arrangements. But the Association of Metropolitan Authorities—which represents 77 local councils, including the Inner London Education Authority—has told the committee that many local authorities would be unable to pay 15 per cent of their polytechnic spending without considerable rate increases. As a result, Oakes is expected to recommend a careful phasing-in of the direct local contribution over a period. The suggestion is that in the first year of the new scheme only 5 per cent and in the second 10 per cent. At that point there would be a review. Major changes in the regional arrangements for coordinating higher education will also be a part of the Oakes report. A DES document considered by the committee last week proposed the creation of a new set of regional councils to take over the work of the nine existing regional advisory councils. The new councils would differ by combining responsibility for teaching and research with the existing local government duties and prerogatives. The detailed working of this veto is to be the subject of a Department of Education and Science paper at the next meeting of the committee. One feature is likely to be that if seven will have to be unanimous when exercising it. Polytechnics and colleges themselves will account for another seven members. The Committee of Directors of Polytechnics and the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education will nominate two each, the remainder being appointed by the Secretary of State. This group is expected to include at least one principal of a non-polytechnic institution and a member of the National Union of Students. A final seven members also nominated by the Secretary of State, to represent "other interests" such as the universities, the schools and members of the regional bodies. There would also be two representatives of industry and an independent chairman. Although the national body is to

Third fewer want teacher courses

The decrease in those wanting to teach mathematics and especially physics is greater than average. The numbers are down by more than one third compared with this time last year. Although a fall was expected in view of the reduction of places by more than 12 per cent the figure is causing concern. The total number of applications was 7,219—5,077 men and 1,142 women—compared with a total of 10,843 last year. Next October there will be 9,450 teacher education places outside the universities, including one-year specialist courses mounted at the Government's request. This year there are 12,000. Applications for postgraduate teacher education courses are lagging 10.5 per cent behind the equivalent figure for last year, in line with a 10 per cent drop in the number of places available.

Students end classes boycott

Social work students at North East London Polytechnic have ended their boycott of lectures and seminars attended by Mr Suresh Vyas, the Norwina education welfare officer whose eligibility for the polytechnic's social work course is in dispute. A levels went up to 57.4 per cent, an increase of nearly 9 per cent on last year. This is still considered too small by many colleges since the profession is to become all-graduate from 1980. Of the four-year teacher training courses this autumn was 13,565, compared with a target of 12,000. More than 1,800 students were admitted to diversified courses. The Universities Council for the Education of Teachers show that postgraduate certificates of education students from universities failed almost as well in the job market this year as they did last. By mid-October 3,275 had obtained teaching posts in this country of 4,711, a percentage of 69.5 compared with 70.1 last year. The number making up other employment, whether permanently or part-time, while still seeking a teaching post, has risen to 294 compared with last year's 164.

Induction by 1981

Now full-time further education teachers who have received no pre-service training should take an induction training course, according to a report sent with a Department of Education and Science circular this week. The DES has taken more than two years to act on the report on the training of teachers in further education. It recommends that the training requirement should be introduced before 1981.

BOOKS

Numbering the past

The Quantitative Approach to Economic History by C. H. Lee

Martin Robertson, £5.85 and £4.45

Dr Lee seeks to provide an introductory survey of efforts to investigate historical questions with economic theory and statistical technique—a daunting task.

An outline of the main elements of statistical inference follows. This discussion is extensively illustrated by examples drawn from recent historical research.

not only homoskedasticity and non-autocorrelation of residuals but also the requirement that there be no systematic relationship between the exogenous variable(s) and the error term of each equation.

Lee's book has the virtues of treating most areas of recent research except, oddly, the research on slavery and United States economic development, the topic which has been the focus of the most extensive, sustained, and controversial quantitative historical research.

It is also a pity that he is unwilling to go beyond mere presentation of synopses of quantitative research and offer independent criticism of that research.

Finally in the debate on counterfactuals Lee argues that: "It seems reasonable to conclude that there is a role for the counterfactual model in the study of economic history but that it is a technique that possesses only limited application to problems of a particular nature and does not have universal applicability."

This is an extremely perverse view for one who professes the usefulness of statistical methods in historical inquiry. Only an absolute determinist, convinced of the inevitability of all events, can reject counterfactual possibilities.

While students may find Lee's book useful, it is neither as stimulating nor as valuable as might reasonably be hoped. To be fair, however, the task he has undertaken is forbiddingly difficult and Lee's book does offer the dedicated reader some limited guidance.

William Kennedy



St. Mark from the York Gospels. A genuine relic of the pre-conquest Minster, since this Gospel Book was already in York by about 1000.

In the historical underworld

Crime in England 1550-1800 edited by J. S. Cockburn

Methuen, £10.50 and £6.95

Appropriately enough, this interesting and path-finding volume of new essays on crime in the early modern period opens with an introduction by Professor G. R. Elton in which the misdemeanours of the contributors are exposed and receive due correction.

Their approach, it is said, turns "crime" into a tool for analysing social standards and behaviour and offers opportunities for moral disapproval. Certainly their preoccupation with "history from below" endows the contributors with a bias which is different from Professor Elton's own.

Mr Hinton has an enormous area of study which he covers with an astonishing depth of knowledge.

"stretches the category 'crime' beyond what it can safely bear" and helps make Essex look like "the one county equipped with criminals".

Bowdlered and alarmed by the intrusion of this prosecutor-cum-judge and fearful lest his innocent contributors should be carted off to the new Tyburn being hastily erected at Cambridge, the cornered editor porfesso becomes a counsel for the defence.

In fact as the trial proceeds the confusion is dispelled and, to cut a long story short, the contributors are either acquitted outright or let off with a caution.

Altogether the book parades a formidable amount of research and a barrage of new questions. The result is a corresponding host of new insights into the machinery of justice, into the mentality and sociology of law-breakers and upholders, into social attitudes to crime, and into the complex relationship between the theory and practice of the law.

And yet in the last analysis it was the strength of the contributors' case rather than the leniency

of the judge that secured the acquittal. Dr Baker—an honest Cambridge man, never really under suspicion anyway—writes informally about criminal courts and procedure in this period.

Dr Curtis, with unusual modesty, tries to make sense of general sessions appearances in *Debitis*. There are two very nice accounts of (and frequent doubts in) Newgate prison, and there is a somewhat unsystematic, psychoanalytical treatment of infanticide in the eighteenth century.

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R. C. Richardson

BOOKS

Under the absolutists

Early Modern France 1560-1715 by Robin Briggs

Government and Society in Louis XIV's France edited by Roger Mettam

Briggs has lighted on an area where a fresh and imaginative text-book was long overdue, for the gulf between the findings of scholars and the oversimplifications of the books used in many sixth forms and consulted by many undergraduates has grown to unacceptable proportions.

Yet his presentation carries dangers of its own. Apart from a general warning at the outset the author provides almost no indication of the points in the text where the evidence is fragmentary or about which there is considerable controversy.

extant that one of his central themes is the problems created by the expansion of the governmental sector, under the impact of large-scale warfare, at a time of economic contraction, he succeeds remarkably well.

Yet at other points he is not nearly so convincing and tends to slip back into a rather old-fashioned presentation of political events.

Simply to declare that "as long as there were still troops there would always be some Protestant zealots ready to turn them against the King..." does not get one very far.

This weakness, however, does not derive solely from problems with the structure of the book in which as Briggs observes, some cards have inevitably got in front of the horses.

New World outposts

The American Colonies from Settlement to Independence by R. C. Simmons

Longman, £8.95

In an actively researched field, it remains surprising that there are so few usable surveys of the colonial period in American history.

His approach is strictly traditional. Beginning with an introductory chapter on the Europeans and the North American continent before 1620, including the first hesitant settlements on the Chesapeake, Simmons proceeds to explore the story of the firmer establishments of societies in the New World in the later seventeenth century covering their links with the mother country as well as their internal development.

The same conventional orientation informs Simmons's handling of the eighteenth century. There are perceptive lucid chapters on the extraordinary growth and expansion of the colonies, their religious and culture, their political institutions and ideology.

"nurtured first resistance and then revolution". In a nicely-paced conclusion, Simmons traces the story through the crisis of the 1760s and early 1770s, the Declaration of Independence and the setting up of the new state constitutions by 1777, leaving the reader uncertain as to the outcome of the Revolution, a feeling which perhaps the essence of a complex subject such as this.

The book provides a good synthesis of the scholarship of the past 20 years. Simmons has the facility to capture succinctly the essence of a complex subject such as this.

He also has the sense to recognize the limitations of his account. At the end of his remarks on the cultural and intellectual milieu of the Restoration colonies, for example, he acknowledges that his definition of culture is inadequately narrow.

The principal flaw of the study

consequently his perspective is not so clear. This, while the format and presentation of this study suggests that it is an introductory textbook and while it will constitute an indisputable gain for most sixth formers and undergraduates, its use at this level will pose problems.

Briggs's conclusions about the nature of the absolutist regime are fully borne out by the edition of documents presented with great care and skill by Dr Mettam. The sources are almost entirely from the 22 years of Colbert's administration (1661-1683) but they have been selected, arranged and introduced in a way which serves to lay bare the mechanisms through which the King governed and the essential features of the social order.

The collection is neatly divided into sections each dealing with an aspect of the government of the provincial estates, municipalities, taxation, justice, commerce — with a final chapter devoted to the major revolts of the period.

This weakness, however, does not derive solely from problems with the structure of the book in which as Briggs observes, some cards have inevitably got in front of the horses.

David Parker

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Vertical text on the left margin: 1550

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BOOKS

Seamless web of history

Medieval Foundations of Renaissance Humanism
by Walter Ullmann
Black, £3.25
ISBN 0 236 40081 9

The humanist Coluccio Salutati once wrote a book *On the Nobility of Law and Medicine* to answer the question, which of the two professions is the better. A modern reader is likely to consider the question fruitless if not meaningless. Yet teachers of history in schools and universities still seem locked in an equally sterile debate: that of the nobility of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

Disturbances of the Renaissance tend to give the impression that the Middle Ages were less interesting, not actually inferior; medievalists return the compliment, while the achievements of artists and intellectuals of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are disputed territory between the two rival empires. This kind of academic warfare binds us from understanding Bede or Dante or Petrarch or Nicholas of Cusa by presenting the millennium from 500 to 1500 as two static periods, each defined by contrast to the other, rather than as a time of continuous change. Of course, good scholars do not make the contrast between Middle Ages and Renaissance in such crude terms, but the danger of seeing successive centuries as antitheses of one another remains.

It was, therefore, an excellent idea to ask a distinguished medievalist, Professor Walter Ullmann, to say what Renaissance humanists look like from his side of the fence; to describe its medieval "foundations" or "roots", roots which, he tells us, "lie deeply buried in the past".

Renaissance humanism does not begin suddenly with Petrarch, he suggests, because Thomas Aquinas and other thirteenth-century writers were also concerned with man's *humana*, his natural capacities. It does not begin in the thirteenth century either, because the "secularization of government" and "secularism in society" are already visible in the twelfth century, in the rise of autobiography, in the historical thought of Otto of Freising, and above all in the revival of Roman law and its "appropriation" for the purposes of secular government. Here Ullmann joins all the historians, from C. H. Llewellyn onwards, who have written of a "twelfth-century Renaissance", but he distinguishes his work from theirs in his emphasis on continuous development.

His main point, that the movement we call the Renaissance is not clearly distinguishable from what went before it—our history is a seamless web—is well taken. It is not so very different from the interpretations of Renaissance humanism offered by Eugenio Garin and Paul Kristeller, for example, but it has a distinctive flavour. It is not a simple like Sir Richard Southern's suggestion that the period 1100-1320 was "one of the great ages of humanism in the history of Western Europe"; but where Sir Richard was mainly concerned with theology, and the increasing emphasis of man as a means of knowing God, Ullmann writes from the standpoint of a historian of political thought.

Indeed, a more appropriate title for his book might have been, *Medieval Foundations of Renaissance Political Humanism*. Although he begins by admitting that "Renaissance humanism meant different things to different people", it is only those individuals who concerned themselves with law and

BOOKS

Land of legends

The Narrow Ground: Aspects of Ulster 1609-1969
by A. T. O. Stewart
Faber & Faber, £5.95
ISBN 0 571 10325 1

For readers unfamiliar with the complex mythology of Northern Ireland July 12 may pass unnoticed, but it is in fact the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne in which the Protestant William of Orange defeated the Catholic James II. The deeds of "great glorious King William" in preserving "freedom and Protestant law" are yearly celebrated by Orange parades throughout the Province. The fact that William disliked Irish Protestants, that he delayed provisioning Londonderry until the besieged were eating rats and starch, and that he conquered Ireland in close alliance with anti-French Protestants are not mentioned—by either side.

It is with a view to emphasizing such convenient facts that Dr Stewart has written this entertaining and useful book. As he remarks, the Irish "have woven for themselves a garment of myth and legend which they call their history". Having designed it themselves, they have taken great care to make it as comfortable as possible, eliminating the loose threads and rough edges. This is, of course, not much different from the practice of both nations. Only in Ireland there are two such garments, Protestant and Catholic, so differently tailored that they cannot be worn at the same time.

Stewart selects five key episodes of Ulster history which figure in one or both legends, and revises the accepted interpretation of each. One on the one hand to the economic necessity for the native Irish as tenants and small landholders, and on the other to the land available for quite new English and Scottish settlement. Distinctions in the Province became rapidly based on current religion rather than past descent; the surmises of many non-Fairfax Gaels of the present time are Planter, while many Orange stal-



One of the saints on an altar-piece carved by Jacques de Buerze for the Chateau de Champanon from the Late Middle Ages; Art and Architecture by Wim Swann, published by Elek at £18.00.

Waxing of the middle ages

Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth-Century England, third edition
by J. R. Lander
Hutchinson, £5.50 and £2.50
ISBN 0 09 129190 9 and 129191 7

Professor J. R. Lander's *Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth-Century England*, first published in 1969, has now reappeared in a third edition, which takes account both of recent research and of the author's own new thinking.

As a short but comprehensive guide to the period, neither a mere political survey nor simply a *rechauffé* of other men's labours, it remains hard to rival. If the argument is sometimes conventional, the evidence is often unchallenged and striking. Few will know that of the 50 richest men in Christendom 12 were in England to points used to illustrate the Lollard case for ecclesiastical disendowment) or that the statutes of several Oxford colleges specifically mention homicide as a cause for the expulsion of fellows (showing the communitarian nature of violence). In an introductory work footnotes would be out of place; but it is a compliment to the author's discrimination and breadth of reading that one feels the lack of them.

Like other medievalists, Lander views the fifteenth century as a period little different in political essentials from those which it followed and preceded. Mindset times came not with a change of dynasty, whether in 1461 or 1485, but with the change of system which was imposed between 1610 and 1660 and followed up in 1688. Continuity is in favour, the waxing of the Middle Ages and the new monarchy are out, and the conservative nature of late medieval political life is persistently emphasized. The breakdown of order which came with the Wars of the Roses was not a general but the inevitable consequence of kingship at all times; "baronial feudalism", the dominant form of social organization, was no more than a development, beginning long before 1400 and lasting long after which it had the known for nearly 200 years. In this sense, it is so institutional one, Yorkist (and other) rule was different from that of any other government since Henry III's time. That Lander's book can provoke such disagreements is one mark of its value.

J. R. Maddicott

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20 Bloomsbury Square, WCI

Starring Thomas Cromwell

Reform and Reformation: England 1509-1558
by G. R. Elton
Edward Arnold, £9.95 and £3.50
ISBN 0 7131 5952 0 and 5953 7

This is not, as its subtitle might suggest, a history of England between 1509 and 1558, but a history of government policy and government institutions during that period: it is indeed about reform and reformation. Those who seek a full exploration of social and economic problems, for instance, must look elsewhere, since Professor Elton is primarily concerned with the explanations offered by contemporaries and with the response of government to such problems.

The book contains no detailed account of the rebellions of the period, and regional topics—with the exception of Ireland, for which the author has been able to draw upon the work of Brendan Bradshaw—are largely omitted. The book, however, is unbalanced. Only 60 of its 400 pages are devoted to the reigns of Edward VI and Mary, and what is said in those pages is of less weight than what has gone before.

Professor Elton makes good use of the recent studies of Michael Walsh and Dale Hoak on the policies and practices of Edward's government, and, as might be anticipated, the author has been able to draw upon the reforms of 1552-54, although not all historians would agree that these reforms "completed" rather than "superseeded" the work of Thomas Cromwell. However, his acquaintance with Somerset, whom he regards as both acquisitive and incompetent, leads to a somewhat satisfactory dismissal of the crisis of 1549; he suggests, for example, that the clash conflict so evident

in the risings of that year was the result of "a poor harvest after a run of good ones" which aggravated the effects of inflation, although in fact the risings began before the harvest was in or high prices could have been predicted. It is also disappointing to find no reference to the "reformation of manners" or the conspicuousness of Mary's reign, and repeating them with such conviction.

The book's value, then, lies mainly in its treatment of the reign of Henry VIII. Here, on his own ground, Elton is at his best. While it is possible that certain messages such as that on the Commons' "supplication against the Ordinaries" will pose problems for those not conversant with the views of all the participants in the controversy, Professor Elton's assertive and unambiguous prose style in general makes for an easy understanding of even rather technical matters. He is certainly unfair to Wolsey, whom he describes as a man who wanted to get things done, possessed of "all the energy and much of the competence required" but with a fatal tendency "to substitute pretence for reality"; not enough credit is given to the Cardinal for the Elytham ordinance and the proposals it contained which formed the return of the privy council actually implemented by Thomas Cromwell, nor, perhaps, is sufficient consideration being given to Wolsey's part in obtaining for England a new status as a European power. However, the evidence and arguments are set out in sufficient detail for the reader to formulate his own opinions.

The star of the show, as the evidence suggests—three monarchs and one minister—is Thomas Cromwell. Elton's claims for Cromwell are well supported by the evidence, and he is recommended to some extent to take account of earlier criticism, as well as in the light of his own

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BOOKS

The abiding curse of Adam

Living with Capitalism by Theo Nichols and Huw Beynon... The Ideology of Work by P. D. Anthony... Shop Stewards in Action by Eric Batstone, Ian Boraston and Stephen Frenkel...

having practical skills and separating the theoretical from the practical side of production. What is not at all clear in their analysis is what is especially 'capitalistic' about this, save to the extent that the creation of social labour through the 'radical extension' of the division of labour...

According to Genesis III, 19, when Adam was expelled from the Garden of Eden, it was with the admonishment: 'you shall sweat your bread by the sweat of your brow'...

Presumably Nichols and Beynon also want their readers to understand that most other workers employed by capitalists then were craftsmen; but, above all, the implication of their assumptions about the past is that once upon an historical time those whose brows were highly valued and it has been capitalism, and possibly capitalism alone, which has debased them.

The essential characteristic of the curse of Adam in the twentieth century, then, is not some hypothesized devaluation of skill but what Living with Capitalism calls 'an increasingly broadly conceived capitalist imperative to control', although this imperative has very little to do with 'capitalism' as such, even when this is presented in such misleading verbal guises as 'corporate capitalism', 'monopoly capitalism' or 'state capitalism'.

This, indeed, is where the significance of trade union action lies, and it is indicative of this significance that trade union members are much more concerned with disputes about pay, sickness or accident at work, and the exercise of managerial authority than with the creation of skill as such, or with craftsmanship as a desired and valued aspect of the content of their jobs.



"Those who perform the most arduous tasks still gain the most"

For all that he, too, is more concerned with the ideology of work under 'capitalism' than with any other type of society, P. D. Anthony is aware, in a way that Nichols and Beynon are not, that it is largely since the end of the Middle Ages that men have begun to value craftsmanship in their sense. As he points out, among the Greeks, engaging in industry or trade, pursuing a craft or promoting business, were regarded as more propitiously the activities of slaves than of citizens.

The organization of workplace conflict and agreement in the context of unions and companies and of rules and precedents, applying to each workplace and office, is what Shop Stewards in Action is about. All the authors point out, in their introduction, is that the study is confined to a single large, multinational company, the implication is that its findings are indicative of the world of work in general.

time to time these books refer to company policy or capitalistic strategy, neither of them pays any attention to directors or capitalism as such, in the actual process of negotiating with, or manipulating, the other people with whom the researchers talked in their studies.

The abiding curse of Adam has been, not labour as such, but the exploitation of human beings by other human beings and the consequent division of society into the labouring and the privileged, the working and the lazed, although never idle, classes.

Thus, the important historical development for Anthony was "the construction of economic man as a concept". This he sees as now being the Reformations. Following Max Weber rather than Marx, he argues that the evaluation of work as a goal in itself and as a social duty followed directly from the religious content of the calling. Far from capitalism devaluing work, capitalism and socialism have been consequences of its glorification.

In the most fundamental relationship of all one party is consistently seeking. Yet it is clearly one of the features of the socialist alternative to contemporary industrial organization that the direction of enterprises be tackled in realistic terms.

The British Steel Corporation's experiment with employee directors is a case in point, and it is of some interest to notice that Worker Directors Speak was conceived in the main as an answer to criticisms, especially from university researchers. One study in particular—that published by Peter Brunton and his colleagues in 1976—had claimed that the Steel Corporation had sought to bring about changes in the industry by 'helping to make ordinary employees feel involved in policy-making and following a shop-floor perspective to be heard in the board room'.

As compared with most sites of a similar kind in this country, Riverside has probably had more capital investment in machinery and equipment to facilitate these processes. But capital needs to make a profit, not make work easier.

When, therefore, Nichols and Beynon deplore the immense waste of human potential that is locked up within capitalist factory production "the desirability and urgency of 'the need for a fundamental restructuring of British society' is its pertinent to ask them: what ways a 'new socialist view' is likely to 'return' craft skills to the manufacture of chemicals, or motor cars, or any form of production which still depends, technically speaking, on labour. Certainly, the 'old' socialist view, which sought to replace the private ownership of the means of production by public ownership and the anarchy of the capitalist market economy by a planned command of labour and other resources, simply assumed that this would release human potential and make workers willing to work.

What is lacking in Shop Stewards in Action, as in Living with Capitalism, is an account of relationships between people in the workplace, stewards, foremen or managers, and the people who sit at the very top of the organization. Although from time to time these books refer to company policy or capitalistic strategy, neither of them pays any attention to directors or capitalism as such, in the actual process of negotiating with, or manipulating, the other people with whom the researchers talked in their studies.

What it emphasizes are the different ways in which the nation of labour can be, and achieved at the present time, offers a timely warning about the significance of the exercise of autonomy of workers' organizations in opposition to the power of employer and the state, and independently of the interests of directors, which it does not do at all. Class Conflict: Critical Industrial Relations, the most genuine element in the political philosophy of modern 'capitalist' society, are trade unions which are alone in representing the interests unambiguously of the interest of ordinary workers in the most 'mercenary' social relationship of all, the 'wage' relationship.

Roland Barthes: A Conservative Salute by Philip Thody... ISBN 0 333 21926 0

Roland Barthes is enjoying something of a publishing boom in this country and with Professor Thody's book, the first in English to be devoted exclusively to Barthes, he enters the select league of postwar French thinkers to be accorded detailed biographies in his own native transatlantic importance. Philip Thody's study is a welcome contribution to present debate, assigning itself the task, without undue grinding of axes, of examining 'how the ideas which Barthes himself expresses in his own books can be applied outside his traditional milieu'.

The fundamental structuralist reaction, indicative in the Sartrean tradition that meaning is woven in a structure and constant in its asserting 'that human being, can exercise choice in the way they communicate'. In this way Thody pulls the plugs not only on the more arcane and unfamiliar ideologies of the French intellectual but also on the crucial idea that literature, for Barthes, is a dynamic and plural structured fabric of differentiated codes. Forgetting that plurality is an interplay of finite horizons of meaning, Thody finds 'a shade miserably' Barthes's contention that five codes will account for all of Balzac's modestly plural Sarrazine. Suggesting that the ideas of S/Z are not 'carried through to the point where they could be used as a basis for aesthetic evaluation', he omits to note what Barthes's concept of 'finite and convertible ("readable" and "writable") owe to such evaluation.

It is true that this evaluation is not a moral issue for Barthes, and is understood within a whole and unitary context of reading and writing. But it is this notion of a dynamic work that Barthes's work that is singularly lacking here. By abstracting out the changing conceptual framework of Barthes's work as a ghostly, wandering, ghostly, of course, not necessarily an easy target, but tiling in one as Thody does will not transform it into a real presence, nor indeed, will it make it any easier, Professor holding it valiantly but he is left holding merely a shroud.

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with the fiction of Christa Wolf and Hermann Kant. It remains debatable, however, whether novels like Der geteilte Himmel became 'works of distinction' through the manner in which they treated the schism in which their time and West, rather than by virtue of the internal reckoning with Stalinist dogmatism which they initiated. The East German insistence that the division within the nation be seen in the third chapter, in terms of works portraying the Federal Republic as a thinly veiled reincarnation of the contrasted East, Thody's emphasis is particularly misleading. Kant may suggest in Die Aula that the establishment of the GDR opened up an unbridgeable gulf between 'the old' and the 'new', continually is generally a decidedly pessimistic view of the past, crucial to the achievement of identity, and strongly contrasted to the disorientation and rootlessness from which the bourgeoisie is seen to have emerged. The GDR's claim to be the rightful heir to the humanism of Goethe and Schiller would have helped restore the balance.

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